

The Bottom Line

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS FOR SMALL AND MID-SIZED COMPANIES

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BLC announces its membership in the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program



Black | Line Consulting has been named as a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and Small Business Specialist due to its proven track record of customer satisfaction, and competence in leveraging Microsoft technologies to provide excellent small business-related solutions. Membership in the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program will provide Black Line with resources to help it develop and deploy robust small business solutions that will help customers to better manage and capitalize on their company's data.

"Black Line is extremely pleased with our new status as a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and Small Business Specialist," said Jody Jankovskys, managing partner and owner of Black Line. "Being a Gold member of the program allows us to clearly promote ourselves to customers as having proven expertise in providing high-quality small business solutions.

The incremental benefits provided through our Gold membership, such as technical-support personnel who have evaluated, tested and/or currently use the latest Microsoft solutions, will allow us to continue to enhance the offerings that we provide for customers."

The Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program provides a way for customers to identify companies that have proven their commitment and expertise in one or more specialized areas when delivering Microsoft technologies. Microsoft Certified Partners who meet the highest set of criteria, including advanced certification and a portfolio of real-world customer references, are identified as Gold Certified - the most skilled partners in specific solution areas.

"In order for companies to respond more quickly to customers and understand new market opportunities, they depend on an agile technology environment to empower their company's key decision makers," said Allison Watson, Vice President of the Partner Sales and Marketing Group at Microsoft Corp. "Microsoft recognizes that companies

need a high-caliber technology partner who speaks the language of both business and IT and can deliver the most meaningful solutions through technology. Today, Microsoft recognizes Black Line for demonstrated customer satisfaction with previous business intelligence deployments. This distinction brings value to the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program and makes it clear that Black Line has the skills and experience to provide high-quality small business solutions utilizing Microsoft technology."

Black | Line Consulting was founded in 1993 by Jankovsky and is a full service IT solutions provider, offering services in three areas, Strategic "CIO" Service, Network Services and Software Services. Black Line provides high quality and affordable technology services, products and support to small and mid-sized companies. Black Line's goal is to help clients keep their cursors blinking and their company in the black.

For more information on Black Line visit, www.blacklineconsulting.com.

What's New:

Frontline Technology is Acquired by Black Line

Frontline Technology, located in Elgin, was acquired by Black | Line Consulting on Dec. 1, 2006.

"I think this will be a huge win for our clients," said James Danshill, president of Frontline Technology. "Black | Line Consulting offers a much wider breath of services and support than Frontline Technology had offered clients. I know our former clients will be well taken care of by Black Line."

"James and his team have developed a loyal group of customers and have done so in a way that is in line with our values as a company," said Jankovsky. "We will continue to offer the same great service that their clients have always received, while providing a deeper knowledge base, a wider offering of services, and enhanced administrative operations."

Jankovsky said that the former Frontline clients will continue to be served by an engineer that is familiar with them and their environment. Senior Consultant, Rob Schrader, formerly of Frontline has joined the Black Line team and will continue to serve client's IT needs. Part of Black Line's growth strategy is to acquire IT companies that have top-notch employees who can become part of the Black Line team, which is the case with the acquisition of Frontline. Black Line intends to continue using this strategy to grow their business.

This is the second acquisition by Black Line in 2006. Hyperliant Consulting, formerly an IT firm in Batavia, was acquired by Black Line in August of 2006.

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BLC announces membership in the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program Software that can put parents, business owners at ease

Software that can put parents, business owners at ease

What is your computer really being used for? Are your employees really crunching numbers on that big deal or are they searching the net for a deal on the coolest technology or the hottest new clothes? Is your teenage son or daughter really researching for a school paper or is he or she doing another kind of "research"? Even though the Internet is a very powerful tool for companies and personal users alike, measures should be taken to make sure it is used safely and properly.

For the curious parent or the "up in the middle of the night" business owner, options exist to alleviate these concerns. Software systems are now available to monitor and report on all activities that occur on a computer. Web sites visited, e-mail content, instant message communications, and more can now be tracked and logged for easy review.



While this may seem like an invasion of privacy, it's completely legal. This is a very effective solution and can be implemented on any computer as long as it is owned by the parent or business owner.

For the concerned parent, it provides an effective tool to help protect their children from exposure to undesirable content and people. The Internet has made it possible for greater communication and learning,

but it has also introduced many dangers as well. Pornography and sexual predators have become a growing problem; knowing what your children are up to may not only be prudent but can help protect them as well. Some resources on Internet safety for children are available at www.blacklineconsulting.com/parent.

For the business owner, computer tracking should be reserved for extraordinary circumstances and shouldn't be considered a silver bullet to improve employee productivity. The first step is a strong "electronic use" policy, describing the proper use of office technology. This has become a standard for most businesses today and should be a part of the employee manual. For an example of an electronic use policy, please visit: www.blacklineconsulting.com/policy. Talk to your IT consultant for further security information.